

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 286572  
ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

66011

DRAFTED BY: ARA/AND/E:JAALLITTO

APPROVED BY: ARA/AND:MRBARNEBEY

-----016122 011105Z /10

R 010337Z DEC 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA 3125

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 286572

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE, CARACAS INFO BOGOTA,  
LA PAZ, PARIS, SANTIAGO, USCINCSO, DIA FROM QUITO NOV 29:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 8072

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, EC

SUBJECT: ECUADOREAN PURCHASE OF MIRAGE F-1 INTERCEPTOR

1. SUMMARY: QUITO PAPERS HAVE CARRIED WIRE SERVICE ARTICLES  
QUOTING FRENCH PRESS ON MIRAGE F-1 SALE, BUT GOE HAS NOT  
PUBLICLY CONFIRMED IT. PURCHASE IS CULMINATION OF WELL-  
PUBLICIZED SEARCH BY ECUADOR FOR MACH 2 INTERCEPTOR AIRCRAFT  
WHICH FOUND A NUMBER OF FIRMS COMPETING FOR THE CONTRACT.  
MIRAGE ACQUISITION IS SEEN BY GOE AS RESPONSE TO PERUVIAN  
PURCHASE OF SOVIET SU-22, NOT AS NEW ESCALATION OF ARMS RACE  
IN THE ANDES. END SUMMARY.

2. A NUMBER OF ECUADOREAN PAPERS HAVE PICKED UP AND PLAYED  
PROMINENTLY AP AND AFP REPORTS OF THE SALE OF 18 F-1 MIRAGES  
TO ECUADOR. BOTH WIRESERVICES CITED AND QUOTED EXTENSIVELY  
FROM AN ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN LE MONDE REPORTING THE SALE.  
ACCORDING TO THE WIRESERVICES, LE MONDE NOTED THAT THE US  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 286572

HAD VETOED THE KFIR SALE BECAUSE OF ITS INTEREST IN  
CONTROLLING THE ARMS RACE AND LIMITING MILITARY TECHNOLOGY  
IN LATIN AMERICA. IT NOTED THAT AS PERU TURNED TO THE USSR  
AGAINST THE BETTER JUDGEMENT OF THE US, SO ECUADOR HAD  
NOW TURNED TO FRANCE. LE MONDE CONTINUED, "THE US HAS  
MADE KNOWN TO FRENCH INDUSTRIALISTS ITS DESIRE TO ADOPT  
A POSITION OF PRUDENCE IN THE DELIVERY TO ECUADOR OF HIGHLY

SOPHISTICATED MILITARY EQUIPMENT. IN SPITE OF THESE SUGGESTIONS FROM WASHINGTON, WHICH CONSIDERS LATIN AMERICA A PRIVATE ENCLAVE, CONTINUALLY SUBJECTED TO NORTH AMERICAN EMBARGOES, FRANCE DECIDED TO SUPPLY ECUADOR WITH 18 MIRAGE F-1 INTERCEPTORS." THE LE MONDE ARTICLE ALSO REPORTED THE PRICE AS \$7.2 MILLION PER AIRCRAFT.

3. THE GOE HAS YET TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE MIRAGE PURCHASE, EVEN TO CONFIRM OR DENY THE FRENCH PRESS REPORTS. THIS IS IN LINE WITH ITS GENERAL POLICY WITH REGARD TO ARMS PURCHASES -- IT KEEPS THEM OFFICIAL SECRETS, EVEN THOUGH THEIR ACQUISITION IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. WE DO UNDERSTAND, AND HAVE REPORTED, THAT THE FORMAL CONTRACT FOR THE MIRAGES WAS IN FACT SIGNED IN OCTOBER.

4. THE F-1 PURCHASE CAME TO FRUITION ONLY AFTER A LONG, DRAWN-OUT GOE STUDY OF ALTERNATIVES IN THE WAKE OF THE FEBRUARY 1977 US VETO OF THE SALE OF 24 ISRAELI KFIR INTERCEPTORS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOE CONSIDERED THE F-1 WHEN IT ORIGINALLY BEGAN LOOKING FOR AN INTERCEPTOR BUT REJECTED IT AS TOO COSTLY, TOO COMPLICATED AND HAVING TOO LONG A DELIVERY TIME. IT THEN NARROWED ITS CHOICE TO THE KFIR AND THE F-5. AFTER THE KFIR VETO, THE GOE REPORTEDLY TALKED AGAIN WITH BRITISH-FRENCH (JAGUAR), ISRAELI (SECONDHAND MIRAGE 5 AND III, NEW KFIR), ITALIAN (F-104, G91Y) AND RUSSIAN (MIG-21?, SU-22) SUPPLIERS, AS WELL  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 286572

AS WITH DASSAULT. THEY OPTED FOR THE F-1 LARGELY BECAUSE IT IS A NEW AIRCRAFT WITH SUFFICIENT SPEED (MACH 2 PLUS) AND RANGE TO BE EFFECTIVE AGAINST PERU'S SU-22 AIRCRAFT, AND, MOST SPECULATION HAS IT, BECAUSE OF FAVORABLE "COMMISSIONS" TO SENIOR AIR FORCE OFFICIALS.

5. ECUADOR'S RELATIONS WITH FRENCH ARMS MERCHANTS GOES BACK TO AT LEAST 1972 WHEN IT BEGAN TO EXPORT OIL, JOINED OPEC, AND BECAME A HAPPY HUNTING GROUND FOR ARMS EXPORTING COUNTRIES, SOON THEREAFTER ECUADOR PURCHASED AN UNDETERMINED QUANTITY OF FRENCH AMX-13 TANKS AND THEN THE ANGLO-FRENCH JAGUAR TACTICAL SUPPORT AIRCRAFT. MORE RECENTLY, FRENCH MANUFACTURERS CONTINUE TO BE VERY ACTIVE, ALONG WITH THE ITALIANS AND BRITISH, IN OFFERING ECUADOR AN AIR DEFENSE RADAR/ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE SYSTEM. THE RELATIONSHIP HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN A SMOOTH ONE: ECUADOR HAS CRITICIZED FRENCH INABILITY TO MEET DELIVERY TIMES, TRAINING AND FOLLOW-ON SUPPORT; FRANCE HAS AT TIMES QUESTIONED ECUADOR'S ABILITY AND WILLINGNESS TO PAY THE PRICE AGREED UPON.

6. ECUADOREAN OFFICIALS REACT SHARPLY TO ACCUSATIONS THAT THE F-1 PURCHASE IS AN ESCALATION OF THE ARMS RACE

IN THE ANDEAN SUB-REGION. THEY DESCRIBE IT AS A  
MEASURED RESPONSE TO PERU'S ACQUISITION OF 36 SU-22  
FIGHTER-BOMBERS (IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THEY WERE  
CONSIDERING PURCHASE OF A  
MULTI-PURPOSE FIGHTER BEFORE THEY WERE AWARE OF PERU'S  
SU-22 PURCHASE BECAUSE OF THE THREAT POSED BY PERU'S  
MIRAGES AND ARMOR). BOTH NUMERICALLY AND IN QUALITY  
OF EQUIPMENT, ECUADOR'S ARMED FORCES REMAIN SIGNIFICANTLY  
INFERIOR TO PERU'S. NONETHELESS, THE TIMING OF THE F-1  
PURCHASE MAY CAUSE SOME UNAWARE OF THE BACKGROUND TO  
RAISE THEIR EYEBROWS ABOUT THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE  
ANDEAN EQUATION.  
SURSYRE# CARACAS 11482, WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT  
THE GOV HAD NO INKLING OF ECUADOR'S AIRCRAFT PURCHASE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 286572

PLANS. EVER SINCE THE VETO OF THE KFIR SALE, ALMOST A  
YEAR AGO, IT HAS BEEN COMMON KNOWLEDGE IN QUITO -- AND  
INDEED THOURGHOUT THE WORLD -- THAT ECUADOR WAS SEEKING  
AN ALTERNATIVE. BLOOMFIELD UNQUOTE VANCE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 01-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977STATE286572  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** ARA/AND/E:JAALLITTO  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770445-0491  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t197712104/aaaadkms.tel  
**Line Count:** 140  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 3befcefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ORIGIN ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 30-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 111618  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ECUADOREAN PURCHASE OF MIRAGE F-1 INTERCEPTOR  
**TAGS:** MASS, SOPN, EC, FR  
**To:** LIMA  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/3befcefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009